/289 cont./

nets is a task for the men, that of the mats a task for the women. Usually several women work together on a mat; it is not difficult work, but the hard pulling and constant twisting of the weft threads (they are twisted only when they are plaited through) affects the fingers so much that deep, calloused ridges run across the finger tips of the plaiters. Apparently there are women in the villages who provide the entire village with mats; at least large supplies of them were found in certain houses, and to buy them I was sent into specific huts where mats were made.

For the plaiting which is done by the men, strips of buriti bast and the leaf pinnae of the oaguassu palm are used. The strips of buriti bast are used only in the making of hats. Apparently the method of making hats is copied from the neighboring Brazilians. At least the shape is the same; but whether all the types of plaited strips which are sewed together spirally into a hat correspond to Brazilian designs, or whether there are innovations here, I do not know. The most common design, consisting of four-part strips with a notched edge, seems to be Brazilian, the other two, the eleven-part strip with a smooth edge and the nine-part strip with a smooth, double edge, may be original forms in view of the plaiting skill of the Indians (Ill. 139 a-c). These strips are sewed together with fine bast threads and a bone needle four centimeters long (Ill. 140).

For all other plaiting the leaf pinnae of the oaguassu palm are used. The material for this is stored in the houses in large /290/ quantities, mostly lying on the floor under mats; in Schischá it also lay on special forked racks on the long sides and in the roundings of the houses.

In the same way as for the house covering, two oaguassu fronds are laid with the ribs one on top of the other in the making of walls, fans, and eye shades, except that in this case the individual pinnae /Ills. 139 and 140 appear here/ are then plaited together. See the beginning of a piece of plaiting in Ill. 5 on Plate 58 /see p. 219/.

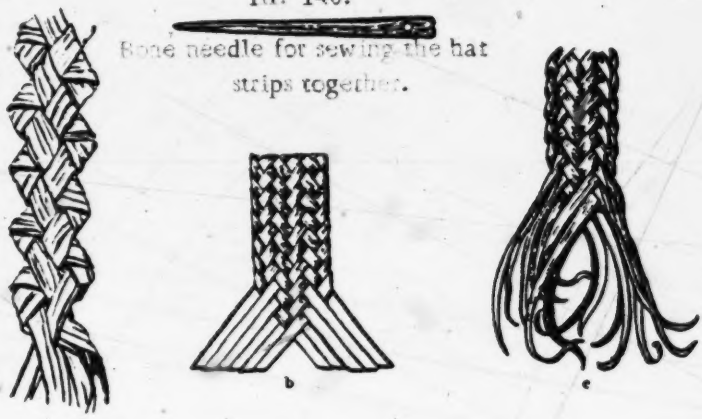
/290 cont./

285 The baskets show great variety. The individual types are similar to those described by Max Schmidt, so I can limit myself

294 285

Ill. 140.

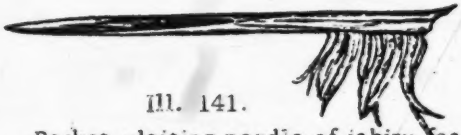
Bone needle for sewing the hat strips together.



Ill. 139 a-c.

Hat-plaiting strips: a) four-part, b) eleven-part, c) nine-part.

285 [237]



Ill. 141.

Basket-plaiting needle of jabiru feather quill.

to very brief descriptions.

In the case of large round baskets (wälili, Ehrenreich rorä; Pl. 57, Ill. 3) with a forehead carrying-strap, which are used to transport manioc, the edge consists of the split palm-rib. The pinnae are interwoven and provide a meander-type design. The bottom is reinforced by being interwoven with a second layer of individual pinnae which are cut to the specific length [237] with piranha teeth. A thick jabiru feather quill 16.5 centimeters